The Bylaws of the Montgomery County Master Gardeners Association

Article I: Name, Purpose, and Organizational Affiliation

Section 1.
The name of this not-for-profit, volunteer based organization is the Montgomery County Master Gardeners Association (MCMGA).

Section 2.
The purpose of this Association is to serve the citizens of Montgomery County with educational and consulting activities, addressing horticultural and associated problems using information derived from a broad base of knowledge developed and/or endorsed by the University of Maryland Extension.

Section 3.
The MCMGA will pursue its mission under the supervision of the Montgomery County Master Gardener Coordinator (MCMGC) in conjunction with the Director of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office. Reports of the activities of the MCMGA will be submitted as requested to the MCMGC for review to assure that those activities are consistent with the goals of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office. Reports of the activities of the MCMGA will also be periodically submitted to the Director and the State MG Coordinator for review to assure that MG activities are consistent with the goals of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office, and that the support needs of the program are being met in a manner consistent with the resources available to the University of Maryland Extension.

Article II: Membership

Section 1.
Membership is open to all those meeting the qualifications of a Master Gardener regardless of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression. A minimum qualifying requirement is the successful completion of the basic Master Gardener course and internship requirement. Qualifications for maintaining good standing as members of the MCMGA shall be based on evidence of continuing service to carry out the basic mission of this Association as specified in Article 1: Section 2. Members in good standing shall have met their annual volunteer and education hours for the previous year. Criteria for meeting the requirement of hours shall be established by the MCMGC in consultation with the State MG Coordinator.

Section 2.
Membership dues shall be established for the purpose of supporting various activities not covered by the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office. The level of dues shall be proposed by the Executive Board, with final approval by those members in good standing at a membership meeting. Notice of the vote and the amount of dues shall be sent to the membership one month prior to the vote. Dues should be paid by March 31. Any member not wishing to pay dues may forgo payment by sending a brief written request to the Treasurer or the MCMGC, requesting a waiver for that year. Non-payment of dues will not impact the MCMGA membership status. Confidentiality must be maintained.

Article III: Executive Board and Officers

Section 1.
The Executive Board shall consist of the Officers, the immediate past President, the New Class Representative(s), Member(s) At Large, and Chairpersons and/or co-Chairpersons of the Standing Committees. The Executive Board shall be responsible for assisting the MCMGC with Program formulation, identification of resource requirements, Program execution and reporting.
Section 2.
The elected Officers of the Executive Board shall be: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 3.
Officers are elected for a term of one year. Officers, with the exception of the Treasurer, may not serve for more than 2 consecutive terms in the same office but may be reelected to that office 2 years after leaving it. The Treasurer is not term limited. Member(s) At Large shall serve a term limited to one year and may not be re-elected to the At Large position. Committee Chairpersons and Co-Chairpersons may not serve more than 4 consecutive one-year terms. However, it is recognized that in some instances (small Committees or Committees where a new person does not step forward) a Chairperson or Co-Chairperson may need to serve more than 4 consecutive terms. Officers, Member(s) At Large, and Chairpersons and/or co-Chairpersons of the Standing Committees are nominated by the Nominating Committee and must be elected by the general membership. Chairpersons or Co-Chairpersons of Ad hoc Committees are appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board.

Section 4.
The duties of the Officers shall be as follows:

President—The President shall co-Chair the general membership meeting with the MCMGC, and shall serve as Chairperson of the Executive Board. The President is responsible for communicating effectively with the MCMGC, the Director of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office, the State MG Director and those designated by the Director or MCMGC to ensure that the MCMGA’s activities are supportive of the goals of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office.

First Vice President—It shall be the duty of the First Vice President to exercise the powers of the President in his or her absence. In the event that the President is unable to serve on an ongoing basis, the First Vice President shall become the President. The First Vice President shall be responsible for the coordination of membership matters including the mentor program. The First Vice President shall also be responsible for formation of the Nominating Committee and for overseeing its activities. If the First Vice President has any conflict of interest, then formation of the Nominating Committee will be transferred to an Executive Board member having no conflict of interest. (An example of ‘conflict of interest’ would be if the First Vice President is running for a ‘contested’ office.)

Second Vice President—The Second Vice President shall be responsible for preparation and distribution of the Annual Report and for any other reports requested by the MCMGC or the President. The Second Vice President shall also assist the First Vice President in the completion of that position’s duties as needed.

Secretary—The Secretary shall maintain all MCMGA records. This shall include preparation of minutes of the Executive Board meetings and records of membership meetings as well as their dissemination to the membership.

Treasurer—The Treasurer shall be responsible for formulating the budget, maintaining records of all financial transactions of the MCMGA, and for reconciling MCMGA financial records with those maintained by the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office. A preliminary budget shall be presented by the Treasurer to the Executive Board prior to their November meeting. The preliminary budget is subject to approval by the Executive Board. The final budget will be made available by the Treasurer to any Master Gardener requesting it. Written Treasurer reports of total income and expenditures shall be presented to the Executive Board at each monthly meeting, and placed in the Budget Binder on a monthly basis. The Treasurer may elect to have another Executive Board member present said report if the Treasurer is unable to attend.
Section 5.
In the event that an Executive Board Member is not serving in the best interest of the MCMGA, any member of the MCMGA may submit a written request for dismissal action to the Executive Board. Any such dismissal request shall be voted upon at the next regular monthly meeting of the Executive Board. A two-thirds majority vote of eligible voters in attendance at the Executive Board meeting will result in a dismissal from the Executive Board.

Article IV: New Class Representative

Section 1.
New Class Representative(s)—The New Class Representative(s) shall be selected by the MCMGC and/or the MCMGA President. The New Class Representative(s) shall serve on the Executive Board from March of the year in which he/she is selected through February of the following year.

Article V: Committees

Section 1.
A Standing Committee consists of Montgomery County Master Gardeners who conduct activities which have been approved by the MCMGC and the Executive Board. The Committee Chairperson(s) or a representative appointed by the Chairperson(s) is required to supervise Committee activities in accordance with State guidelines, submit annual reports if required, prepare and manage a budget, and may contribute to the monthly newsletter. The Committee Chairperson(s) or a representative appointed by the Chairperson(s) shall attend Executive Board meetings. The Executive Board may add, delete, combine, or split the Standing Committees at the end of the calendar year as it deems necessary.

Section 2.
Ad hoc Committees shall be established as deemed necessary and dissolved when their mission is completed. The duties of these Committees shall be defined by the Executive Board. These Committees and their missions will be announced to the membership. Chairpersons of Ad hoc Committees are appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board. They may attend Executive Board meetings, but they do not vote.

Article VI: Meetings and Quorum

Section 1.
Monthly meetings of the general membership will be held for the purpose of updating members on Master Gardener activities and for continuing education.

Section 2.
The general membership meeting held each November will be for the purpose of electing Officers and Standing Committee Chairpersons and/or co-Chairpersons for a term of one year.

Section 3.
The Executive Board shall meet monthly to review MCMGA activities and to discuss financial and operational issues. Meetings of the Executive Board are open. Each Office and each Standing Committee has one vote, regardless of the number of co-Officers or co-Chairperson(s). Only Executive Board members physically present may vote. Absent Executive Board members may appoint a non-voting representative to attend Executive Board meetings (See Article V, Section 1). The immediate Past President has one vote. The New Class Representative(s) are treated as a Standing Committee for voting purposes; if there are two New Class Representative(s), only one may vote. Member(s) At Large each have one vote. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the total number of Executive Board members eligible to vote. (A simple majority is defined as one person more than 50%.) For the Board to conduct business, a quorum must be present. A simple majority of voting members who are present is required to pass a motion. No member of the Executive Board may cast more than one vote. No member of the Executive Board may transfer his/her voting rights to another individual.
Article VII: Nominations and Elections

Section 1.
Nominations - The First Vice President shall submit a minimum of three names as members of a Nominating Committee, including the Chairperson of the Committee, to the Executive Board and MCMGC no later than June 1 (except as noted in the Conflict of Interest Section of Article 3. Section 4.) The Executive Board shall conduct a vote at the regular June meeting to approve the members and the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. During July the Nominating Committee shall notify the MCMGA membership of the November election and solicit candidates. The MCMGC shall provide to the Nominating Committee information regarding a candidate’s standing with respect to volunteer hours and continuing education hours for the previous year. The Nominating Committee will present the slate of nominees to the MCMGC and the Executive Board prior to their September Executive Board meeting. Any member of the MCMGA may notify the Executive Board that he/she wishes to have a name added to the slate of nominees, provided that a written petition endorsed by 5% of the membership of the MCMGA endorses this nomination. (Membership is defined as the total number of Master Gardeners published in the previous year’s Annual Report to the State.) The Executive Board may add additional names to the slate of nominees. The Executive Board shall approve the slate of nominees and present it to the general membership in October by printed notice provided through the newsletter or other communications.

Section 2.
Elections – Officers, Member(s) At Large, and Standing Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs will be elected by the MCMGA members at the November general membership meeting unless otherwise scheduled by the President with the approval of the Executive Board. In instances where at least one office is contested, paper ballots will be used and the results tabulated by two or more members of the Nominating Committee who are not running for a contested position on the ballot. The term for Officers, Member(s) At Large, immediate Past President, and Standing Committee Chairperson(s) and co-Chairperson(s) will begin on the first of the year.

Section 3.
Vacancies - Vacancies (other than the President) on the Executive Board occurring during the year will be filled by appointment by the President with the approval of the Executive Board. The person appointed to fill the vacancy shall be designated “Acting.” This individual has the same voting rights that other Board members have under Article VI, Section 3. The time that the “Acting” Executive Board member serves shall not count against any term limits. A formal election to fill those vacancies will be held at the November meeting. In the event that the President must step down, the First Vice President will assume the position of President, and the Second Vice President will assume the position of First Vice President. The position of Second Vice President will be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section 1.
Any member of the MCMGA may propose an amendment to the Bylaws by presenting a petition to the Executive Board signed by 5% of the members of the MCMGA. (Membership is defined as the total number of Master Gardeners published in the previous year’s Annual Report to the State.) The Executive Board shall review the proposed amendment(s), and present the proposed amendment(s) to the membership via the newsletter. The Executive Board may present an alternative amendment or may present its position on the proposed amendment(s) to the membership via the newsletter. The amendment(s) will be voted on at the next regular monthly membership meeting following the announcement in the newsletter. The amendment(s) must be approved or rejected by a simple majority of MCMGA members in attendance at the membership meeting using paper ballots. The ballots shall be counted by one Executive Board member and one non-Executive Board member.
Article IX: Dissolution

Section 1.
The MCMGA shall not be dissolved as long as 25 members request its continuance. In the event of dissolution, all assets of the MCMGA shall become the property of the University of Maryland, Montgomery County Extension, Montgomery County Office.

Article X. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1.
The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the MCMGA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the MCMGA may adopt.